Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A ventricular assist device for a heart, which comprises:

a pump portion,

an inflow tube protruding from the pump portion; ~~and~~

an adapter sleeve of a first predetermined length attached to the inflow tube forming an extended inflow tube having a total length greater than the first predetermined length~~, said adapter sleeve carrying an adjustable attachment member for attaching the adapter sleeve to the inflow tube and to permit said adapter sleeve to extend or retract from an end of said inflow tube~~; and

a gripping member configured to receive said extended inflow tube and couple to an exterior surface of said extended inflow tube.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The ventricular assist device of claim ~~2~~1, ~~wherein said adapter sleeve further comprises~~ further comprising a sewing ring configured to attach ~~wherein the coupling attaches to said sewing ring for attachment~~ said gripping member to ~~the~~ a ventricular apex of a heart.

4. (Previously Presented) The ventricular assist device of claim 1, wherein the adapter sleeve comprises a smooth cylinder of titanium.

5. (Currently Amended) The ventricular assist device of claim 1, wherein said adapter sleeve includes cylindrical grooves forming perforations on the surface of the adapter sleeve, said grooves configured to separate said adapter sleeve ~~whereby the sleeve may be separated~~ along said grooves.

6. (Previously Presented) The ventricular assist device of claim 1, wherein said adapter sleeve is formed of ceramic.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) The ventricular assist device of claim 1 wherein the inflow tube includes a bent end.

9. (Previously Presented) The ventricular assist device of claim 1 wherein the inflow tube includes an extendable end.

10. (Original) The ventricular assist device of claim 1 wherein the inflow tube includes a rotatable end.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A ventricular assist device for a heart~~, which comprises~~ comprising:

a pump portion;

a sewing ring;

an inflow tube protruding from the pump portion; ~~and~~

an adapter sleeve ~~of a first predetermined length~~ attached to the inflow tube; ~~forming an extended inflow tube having a total length greater than the first predetermined length, said adapter sleeve including a first end having~~

a coupling having gripping pads configured ~~in order~~ to attach said coupling to the adapter sleeve and said coupling configured to attach to said sewing ring, said sewing ring configured to attach ~~for attachment~~ to the ventricular apex of a heart, and the adapter sleeve is formed of a smooth cylinder of titanium, said adapter sleeve ~~carrying~~ including an adjustable attachment member configured to attach ~~for attaching~~ the adapter sleeve to the inflow tube and configured to permit said adapter sleeve to extend ~~or~~ and retract ~~from~~ relative to an end of said inflow tube.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (New) The ventricular assist device of claim 1, wherein said adapter sleeve includes an adjustable attachment member configured to attach said adapter sleeve to said inflow tube, said adjustable member configured to permit said adapter sleeve to extend and retract relative to an end of said inflow tube.

15. (New) The ventricular assist device of claim 1, wherein said gripping member includes gripping pins having gripping pads, said gripping pads configured to couple to said exterior surface of said extended inflow tube.

16. (New) The ventricular assist device of claim 15, wherein said gripping member includes a cylindrical ring adapted to receive said gripping pins.

17. (New) The ventricular assist device of claim 16, wherein said gripping member includes a spring ring, said spring ring concentrically surrounding said cylindrical ring and configured to attach to said gripping pins at an end opposite said gripping pads.